



# Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

## Department of Public Safety Standards and Training

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[www.oregon.gov/dpsst](http://www.oregon.gov/dpsst)

**DATE:** May 8, 2023

**TO:** Honorable Members of the Joint Subcommittee On Public Safety

**FROM:** Phil Castle, Director

**SUBJECT:** Informational Hearing on Public Safety Employee Wellness Programs

Staff Focused Programs	Basic Police, Corrections, Telecommunication, Parole and Probation Academy	Leadership Academy Training	Regional Training
Wellness Committee Peer Support Team	Resiliency Training Trauma and Trauma-Informed Response Training	Organizational Wellness Training	Behavioral Health Training Advanced De-escalation and Escalation Prevention Training

### Staff Focused Programs

#### Wellness Committee

The vision of the DPSST Wellness Team is “to be a key resource in employees’ efforts to improve their physical, mental, social and community well-being leading to greater personal and professional productivity”. The DPSST Wellness Committee began in 2018 and started with a wellness survey provided to all employees, assessing areas such as physical, emotional, financial, and lifestyle needs. The committee then deciphered the data to determine program goals and employee needs and wants.

The original program goals, which hold strong today, were to create and maintain a workplace that demonstrates a commitment to employee wellness through an engaged leadership team and strong wellness infrastructure. Secondly to address employees’ desire for increasing knowledge about nutrition and a healthy lifestyle through increased access to healthy eating knowledge and resources, and to address the sedentary nature of many DPSST positions, through increased access to physical activity. Finally, to provide a wellness program that easily adapts to the wellness wants and needs of DPSST staff through increased staff engagement with the Wellness Committee and its activities.

In 2019, the Wellness Committee had become fully implemented and created a newsletter with contributions to include activities, recipes, staff wellness updates, local farmers markets,

*“To cultivate excellence in public safety by developing and delivering training and upholding established professional standards.”*



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wellness tips, and mental health topics, to name a few. Beginning in 2020, the Wellness Committee utilized the newsletter to provide creative opportunities for those whose connections to community and wellness were prohibited by COVID. Today, the Wellness Committee has continued to evolve, this time emphasizing connections with others demonstrated by adding maps for trail walks around campus, encouraging community gathering and contribution through our own local farm stand in the summer months, and learning about our colleagues through employee spotlight postings.

Plans for the future include a more frequent newsletter highlighting areas of wellness from an employee standpoint. The inclusion of articles from a registered dietician in the newsletter, educational wellness lunches, on-shift activities (i.e., cooking demonstrations, physical and mental wellness activities, guest presenters, massages), and providing an updated wellness survey to insure we are meeting the current needs of our employees. Other smaller projects include marking the nature trail with mile markers and looking for more opportunities for outdoor activities for staff to engage in. Lastly, it is another goal to bring monthly activities to agency staff to build habits and keep the wellness conversation going either formally or informally. The biggest addition to the wellness of the agency was the development of an internal Peer Support team.

### Peer Support

The DPSST Peer Support team was officially operational in July of 2022. What originally began as a conversation in 2019, was put on hold due to other pressing events. The DPSST Peer Support team was launched with five members from law enforcement, behavioral health and civilian personnel serving the agency. The efforts of this team have been dedicated to serving the staff of DPSST. Their approach is multi-faceted, whether it be to provide resources and information as needed, or confidential individual intervention and group intervention. These team members are trained in crisis intervention and wellness. This has proven to be an asset to the agency as the peer support team has been able to aid staff in several issues, concerns, and times when staff needed emotional and tangible support, without judgement or fear of gossip.

The peer support team has recently expanded their outreach to encompass those in our student population. At times, students contact the peer support team directly, either formally or informally and at other times, they are made aware of students who may be struggling with something personally or professionally. The peer support team has made themselves available to connect with academy students, providing an ear for them when they may need it. As they are not employees of DPSST, we make efforts to connect them with appropriate resources when necessary and encourage them to engage their own agency resources so they may begin building relationships sooner rather than later.

## **Basic Police, Corrections, Telecommunication, Parole and Probation Academy**

### Resiliency Training

In all disciplines across the academy students receive training in resiliency. The resiliency program is skill-based and is geared towards creating healthy habit-forming behaviors (eating, managing stress, effective sleep, recognizing thinking errors, identifying resources and support



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systems); understanding effective and mal-adaptive coping strategies; suicidality and suicidal ideation; and recognizing cognitive, emotional, and physical responses to acute and cumulative stress. Grounding techniques and common personality characteristics of public safety professionals are also covered within this content as a means of understanding some of the potential pitfalls and that they could overcome them with some self-awareness and effort.

Our Basic Police curriculum carries a three-part series in resiliency delivered in weeks one, nine and sixteen and the content is specifically delivered in accordance with the stages of their academy timeline in relation to other content and, and transition into the community.

### Trauma and Trauma-Informed Response Training

Trauma and trauma-informed response is a new course developed for the basic police academy. As part of this 4-hour course we return to this discussion of vicarious trauma as a reminder that in this profession, taking care of yourself is paramount, and recognizing the symptoms of vicarious trauma, compassion fatigue, and secondary traumatic stress.

## **Leadership Academy Training**

### Organizational Wellness Training

As part of the 80-hour mid-level management academy offered at DPSST, 6 hours are dedicated to Organizational Wellness. This course is designed to introduce executive leaders to evidence-based knowledge and skills related to leading others in a way that cultivates a culture of wellness for self and within an organization. This class includes an exploration of the research behind organizational and personal wellness and provides tools and resources specific to cultivating wellness within oneself and within one's agency or organization. This course is the starting point of an on-going discussion about where the responsibility lies for wellness and well-being. This class lays the foundation for future classes and opportunities to develop and practice role modeling and leading others with intention.

## **Regional Training**

### Behavioral Health Training

The behavioral health program offers regional training throughout the state, which includes elements of wellness, to include resiliency, trauma and trauma-informed care, alcohol and drugs, mental health first aid, and ADEPT (Advanced De-Escalation and Escalation Prevention Training). Many of these courses are delivered on an as-needed basis, though ADEPT is offered monthly around the state.

### ADEPT (Advanced De-Escalation and Escalation Prevention Training)

This evidence-based de-escalation and escalation prevention training was created by subject



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matter experts from law enforcement, behavioral health, and academic professionals to increase first responders' awareness of what personal and unique attributes they bring to a crisis situation. Participants explore their own understanding of how their personal history has created their worldview. Participants look at their current well-being and become familiar with their wellness status in areas of stress, nutrition, mental health, physical health, and sleep. Over the two and a half day training, participants learn how these areas impact personal wellness, and can influence their response when working with a person in crisis.

Additionally, through this advanced crisis intervention course, participants will be able to describe the neurobiology of the brain in a crisis situation; identify the impact of trauma on an individual in crisis and use trauma-informed skills with the individual in crisis; and demonstrate competency with an evidence-based framework to use in a crisis encounter that will increase the potential for a positive outcome. ADEPT is a nationally certified evidence-based program through the International Association of Directors of Law Enforcement Standards and Training, receiving certification in June of 2022.